



## Preparedness News and Information

From FEMA's Office of National Preparedness

April 18, 2003

### NATIONAL NEWS

#### **Terror Alert Lowered to Yellow**

*Associated Press, April 16, 2003*

The Bush administration lowered the national terror alert level to "yellow" Wednesday, saying the end of heavy fighting in Iraq has reduced the threat of terrorist attacks resulting in the relaxation of various security measures around the country.

➤ [Terror Alert Status Lowered](#), *Washington Times*, April 17

#### **Schools Across Nation Redrawing Crisis Plans**

*NY Times, April 12, 2003*

In the last two months, schools in New York City, and elsewhere across the nation, have been redrawing crisis plans, ordering more drills and briefing their staffs on new emergency procedures.

#### **System Taps Data for Bioterror Clues**

*Federal Computer Week, April 16, 2003*

Two Massachusetts based companies have developed web based Syndromic surveillance systems which involve tapping data from laboratories, clinics, pharmacies, hospitals or public health departments and looking for clusters of particular symptoms that may signal a bioterrorist attack.

#### **Homeland Security Seeks Comment on Information Sharing Plan**

*GovExec, April 17, 2003*

The Homeland Security Department is seeking comment on proposed rules for sharing with the government confidential information on threats to the nation's critical infrastructure without risk of that information later being publicly disclosed.

➤ [Homeland Security Dept. Fills Privacy Post](#), *Washington Post*, April 16

#### **Transportation Official Seeks Business Advice on Security**

*GovExec, April 17, 2003*

The head of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) on Thursday called on businesses to help develop a national security plan for transportation systems that will differ from others by encompassing everything from preventive measures to consequence management.

### CONGRESS

#### **Congress Passes Smallpox Immunization Compensation Plan**

*GovExec, April 14, 2003*

Taking swift action after months of negotiations, Congress passed a bill Friday to compensate volunteers who suffer serious side effects as part of the national smallpox immunization campaign.

### **Lawmakers Fish for More Port Security Funds**

*GovExec, April 15, 2003*

Hollings, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee and other lawmakers have been critical of what they see as the Bush administration's shortchanging of security for the nation's seaports.

### **BILLS RECENTLY INTRODUCED**

- **H.R.1790:** To provide for the equitable treatment of rural communities in the distribution of Federal disaster assistance, and for other purposes, *House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, April 11*
- **H.R.1803:** To authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to make grants to reimburse State and local governments and Indian tribes for certain costs relating to the mobilization of Reserves who are first responder personnel of such governments or tribes, *House Transportation and Infrastructure; House Energy and Commerce; House Judiciary Committee, April 11*

## **STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES**

### **Well Prepared for the Worst**

*Newsday, April 14, 2003*

Hospitals across New York State have spent more than \$200 million on security and emergency response measures since the Sept. 11 attacks, according to a [recent study](#) by the Greater New York Hospital Association.

### **Technology Aided Response to SARS**

*Pasadena Star News, April 13, 2003*

While Los Angeles County was quick to respond to the recent SARS concern, a [report](#) released last week by the Little Hoover Commission, an independent state oversight agency, found that California, as a whole, is ill-prepared to respond to environmental hazards, bioterrorism and emerging infectious disease.

### **Emergency Response Takes on More Local Look**

*Ellsworth Weekly, April 13, 2003*

Mike Grant from Maine's Emergency Management Agency maintains CERT can provide the communities with a well-trained, readily available pool of local people who know their community and who can respond during a disaster.

### **First Wave: Citizens Ready to Help in Disasters**

*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, April 11, 2003*

Racine County's Emergency Management office was the first in the state to organize a Citizen Corps council with informed and organized teams of volunteers participating in programs ranging from simple things such as a family developing a household disaster preparedness plan to getting training as an emergency first responder.

- [Commission Votes to Establish Citizen Corps](#), *Sand Mountain Reporter*, April 15

### **Fire Department Urges Residents to Prepared for Quake**

*Times-Standard*, April 13, 2003

April is usually earthquake preparedness month in California, the most seismically active state in the country, but this year state resources are concentrated on homeland security issues, putting seismic safety on the back burner.

### **Disaster Preparedness Underway in Butte**

*Oroville Mercury Register*, April 13, 2003

Members of the Butte County Department of Public Health presented information pertaining to the subjects of Disaster Preparedness and a Smallpox Vaccination Program now under way in the county of Butte at the monthly Community Health Alliance (CHAO) meeting.

### **Schools Prepared for What they Hope will Never Happen**

*Post-Gazette*, April 13, 2003

The heightened preparedness after learning the difficult lesson on Sept. 11 2001 has carried over into school districts and led to school administrators incorporating what they learned from that day into their emergency plans.

- [Shelter in Place](#), *Doylestown Patriot*, April 14
- [Sierra College to Test its Crisis Response Plan](#), *The Union*, April 16
- [UNLV Plans Homeland Security Institute to Train First Responders](#), *Las Vegas Sun*, April 15

### **Terrorism and Money Worry a City**

*Washington Post*, April 16, 2003

At the LAPD's own office of homeland security, John Miller and his staff are busy compiling lists of possible Los Angeles targets and devising contingency plans to confront potential lone gunmen in airports, suicide bombers at the Oscars and a dirty nuclear device at the port.

### **Pooling Local Resources a Great Idea**

*News Journal*, April 15, 2003

The Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing and area civilian officials have laid plans for a Cooperative Healthcare Emergency Management Alliance, which would improve emergency preparedness of member health-care facilities through cooperation, mutual aid, education and joint emergency preparation.

### **GVH Takes Part in Bioterrorism Drill**

*Seguin Gazette Enterprise*, April 15, 2003

Members of the Seguin Fire Department and Guadalupe Valley Hospital took part last week in a Bioterrorism Disaster Drill to prepare for a real disaster situation.

### **FEMA Reviewing County's Preparedness**

*St. Petersburg Times*, April 16, 2003

An official from the Federal Emergency Management Agency is visiting Citrus County to review training records for firefighters after reporting in December that they were not prepared for an emergency at the Progress Energy nuclear plant.

### **County Seeks Grants for Emergency**

*Star-Telegram, April 16, 2003*

Tarrant County Commissioners Court voted to seek a \$10,000 grant from the North Central Texas Council of Governments to create a countywide citizen emergency response team and a \$4,500 grant to set up a countywide council to oversee local emergency response efforts.

### **FEMA: Vermont Yankee Disaster Plan Would Work**

*Brattleboro Reformer, April 16, 2003*

Workers at Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant and residents of the towns within 10 miles of the plant would be safe in case of a disaster there, according to preliminary results announced Tuesday of drills conducted last week by two federal agencies.

### **Deal is Reached in Congress on New York Security Aid**

*NY Times, April 12, 2003*

House and Senate negotiators reached agreement on an aid package that would fulfill New York City's request for tens of millions of dollars to pay for antiterrorism efforts.

### **Disaster Plan Needs Cooperation**

*Pioneer Press, April 17, 2003*

In the event of a terrorist attack, small villages like Norridge and Harwood Heights are planning to get by with some help from their friends — on the suburban, county, regional, state and federal levels.

### **DHS Announces \$165 Million In Grants to States For All Hazards Emergency and Terrorism Preparedness**

*Department of Homeland Security, April 17, 2003*

The Department of Homeland Security's Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate, known as FEMA, has provided \$165 million in grants to help state and local governments better prepare to respond to all hazards preparedness activities and emergency management.

## **RELATED INFORMATION**

### **RECENT REPORTS**

- [Hospital Expenditures for Emergency Preparedness](#), Greater New York Hospital Association, February 2003
- [To Protect and Prevent: Rebuilding California's Public Health System](#), Little Hoover Commission, April 2003

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The information contained in this newsletter was collected from Internet sources. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the official position of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Office of National Preparedness.